

Gardena, California

Gardena is a city located in the South Bay (southwestern) region of Los Angeles County, California, United States. The population was 58,829 at the 2010 census, up from 57,746 at the 2000 census. Until 2014, the US census cited the City of Gardena as the place with the highest percentage of Japanese Americans in California.^[11] Gardena has a large Japanese population, helping make the South Bay region of Los Angeles home to the largest concentration of Japanese companies within the mainland United States.^[12]

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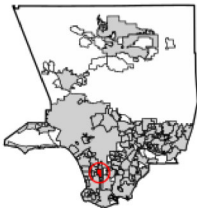

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Gardena, California	
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Flag	Seal
Nickname(s): "Freeway City" ^[1]	
Motto(s): "The City of Opportunity!"	
	
Location of Gardena in Los Angeles County, California.	
	
Location in the United States	
Coordinates: 33°53′37″N 118°18′28″W﻿ / ﻿	
Country	 United

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History

Based on archaeological findings, the Tongva people hunted and fished in the area of today's Gardena.^[13] The Tongva Indians — also known as Gabrielino Indians — are probably descendants of those who crossed from Asia to North America around 10,000 years ago.^[13]

In 1784, three years after the foundation of Los Angeles, Juan Jose Dominguez (1736–1809), a Spanish soldier who arrived in San Diego, California in 1769 with Fernando Rivera y Moncada, in recognition of his military service, received the roughly 43,000-acre (170 km²) Spanish land grant, the Rancho San Pedro. Part of this land contained what became known as Gardena Valley.^[13] After the American Civil War veterans bought parts of the land, and soon ranchers and farmers followed suit.^[13] Union

	States
State	 California
County	 Los Angeles
Incorporated	September 11, 1930 ^[2]
Government	
 • Mayor	Tasha Cerda ^[3] ^[4]
Area ^[5]	
 • Total	5.85 sq mi (15.18 km ²)
 • Land	5.82 sq mi (15.09 km ²)
 • Water	0.03 sq mi (0.08 km ²) <div><div></div><div>0.61%</div></div>
Elevation ^[6]	49 ft (15 m)
Population (2010) ^[7]	
 • Total	58,829
 • Estimate (2018) ^[8]	59,721
 • Density	10,347.77/sq mi (3,990.99/km ²)
Time zone	UTC-8 (PST)
 • Summer (DST)	UTC-7 (PDT)
ZIP codes	90247–90249 ^[9]
Area codes	310/424 ^[10]
FIPS code	06-28168 (https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/DEC/10_DP/DPDP1/1600000US0628168)
GNIS feature IDs	1660664 (https://geonames.usgs.gov/apex/f?p=gnispq:3:::NO::P3_FID:1660664,2410570)

Army Major General William Starke Rosecrans in 1869 bought 16,000 acres (65 km²). The "Rosecrans Rancho" was bordered by what later was Florence Avenue on the north, Redondo Beach Boulevard on the south, Central Avenue on the east, and Arlington Avenue on the west. The Rosecrans property was subdivided and sold in the early 1870s. One of those became the 650-acre (2.6 km²) Amestoy Ranch. Gardena proper began in 1887 when the Pomeroy & Harrison real estate developers subdivided the ranch, anticipating the coming of the Los Angeles and Redondo Railway. Civil War veteran Spencer Roane Thorpe is credited with starting the first settlement in Gardena in 1887.^[13] Railroads put Gardena on the map following a real estate boom in the Los Angeles area in the 1880s.^[13]

Website	<div>www.cityofgardena.org (http://www.cityofgardena.org)</div>
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Some believe the city was named for its reputation for being the only "green spot" in the dry season between Los Angeles and the sea.^[13] Because of its acres of berries, the city was dubbed "Berryland".^[13] The Strawberry Day Festival and Parade was held each May.^[13] The berry industry suffered at the time of World War I as other crops were supported by the war economy.^[14]

Japanese Americans settled in Gardena throughout its history.^[15] Their community was the subject of a *60 Minutes* report in 1970.

The only way Gardena could protect itself from a heavy county tax imposed on a planned project at a park site was to incorporate.^[14] The City of Gardena became incorporated on September 11, 1930.^[14]

From 1936 to 1980, Gardena held a local monopoly on legal cardrooms, the taxes from which accounted for nearly a third of its annual budget.^[16]

Geography

According to the United States Census Bureau, the city has a total area of 5.9 square miles (15 km²), over 99% of which is land. A 9.4-acre wetland preserve, the Gardena Willows Wetland Preserve, is located at the southeast corner of Gardena. This is a naturally-occurring marshland where water seeps above-ground all year round. It hosts several species of trees and other vegetation. It is located near the intersection of Vermont Avenue and Artesia Boulevard.

Gardena is bordered by Athens on the north, the Los Angeles neighborhood of Harbor Gateway on the east and south, Torrance on the southwest, Alondra Park on the west, and Hawthorne on the northwest.

Demographics

2010

The 2010 United States Census^[18] reported that Gardena had a population of 58,829. The population density was 10,030.0 people per square mile (3,872.6/km²). The racial makeup of Gardena was 14,498 (24.6%) White (9.3% Non-Hispanic White),^[7] 14,352 (24.4%) African American, 348 (0.6%) Native American, 15,400 (26.2%) Asian, 426 (0.7%) Pacific Islander, 11,136 (18.9%) from other races, and 2,669 (4.5%) from two or more races. Hispanic or Latino of any race were 22,151 persons (37.7%).

The Census reported that 58,035 people (98.7% of the population) lived in households, 122 (0.2%) lived in non-institutionalized group quarters, and 672 (1.1%) were institutionalized.

There were 20,558 households, out of which 7,199 (35.0%) had children under the age of 18 living in them, 8,782 (42.7%) were opposite-sex married couples living together, 3,931 (19.1%) had a female householder with no husband present, 1,486 (7.2%) had a male householder with no wife present. There were 1,085 (5.3%) unmarried opposite-sex partnerships, and 104 (0.5%) same-sex married couples or partnerships. 5,142 households (25.0%) were made up of individuals and 1,921 (9.3%) had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.82. There were 14,199 families (69.1% of all households); the average family size was 3.39.

The population was spread out with 13,410 people (22.8%) under the age of 18, 5,353 people (9.1%) aged 18 to 24, 16,656 people (28.3%) aged 25 to 44, 15,086 people (25.6%) aged 45 to 64, and 8,324 people (14.1%) who were 65 years of age or older. The median age was 37.9 years. For every 100 females, there were 92.6 males. For every 100 females age 18 and over, there were 89.8 males.

There were 21,472 housing units at an average density of 3,660.8 per square mile (1,413.5/km²), of which 9,852 (47.9%) were owner-occupied, and 10,706 (52.1%) were occupied by renters. The homeowner vacancy rate was 1.3%; the rental vacancy rate was 4.6%. 28,585 people (48.6% of the population) lived in owner-occupied housing units and 29,450 people (50.1%) lived in rental housing units.

Historical population		
Census	Pop.	%±
1940	5,909	—
1950	14,405	143.8%
1960	35,943	149.5%
1970	41,021	14.1%
1980	45,165	10.1%
1990	49,847	10.4%
2000	57,746	15.8%
2010	58,829	1.9%
Est. 2018	59,721 ^[8]	1.5%
U.S. Decennial Census ^[17]		

During 2009–2013, Gardena had a median household income of \$48,251, with 15.5% of the population living below the federal poverty line.^[7]

2000

As of the census^[19] of 2000, there were 57,746 people, 20,324 households, and 14,023 families residing in the city. The population density was 9,921.3 inhabitants per square mile (3,830.9/km²). There were 21,041 housing units at an average density of 3,615.0 per square mile (1,395.9/km²). The racial makeup of the city was 23.82% White, 25.99% Black or African American, 0.64% Native American, 26.82% Asian, 0.73% Pacific Islander, 16.94% from other races, and 5.05% from two or more races. 31.82% of the population were Hispanic or Latino of any race.

There were 20,324 households out of which 33.5% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 44.5% were married couples living together, 18.1% had a female householder with no husband present, and 31.0% were non-families. 25.5% of all households were made up of individuals and 8.2% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.80 and the average family size was 3.38.

In the city, the population was spread out with 25.8% under the age of 18, 8.7% from 18 to 24, 32.3% from 25 to 44, 20.9% from 45 to 64, and 12.4% who were 65 years of age or older. The median age was 34 years. For every 100 females, there were 95.1 males. For every 100 females age 18 and over, there were 91.4 males.

The median income for a household in the city was \$38,988, and the median income for a family was \$44,906. Males had a median income of \$32,951 versus \$29,908 for females. The per capita income for the city was \$17,263. About 12.3% of families and 15.7% of the population were below the poverty line, including 22.3% of those under age 18 and 10.1% of those age 65 or over.

1980

In 1980, about 31% of the population was Anglo white, 23% was black, 21% was Japanese, and 17% was Latino. The remainder included a Korean community that was increasing in size and Chinese, Filipino, and Native American people. The National Planning Data Corp. released projected figures in 1987 estimating that of the 50,000 residents, 26.3% were Anglo, 23% were black, 22.7 were Latino, and 28% were of other racial groups. By 1989, Anglo and Japanese residents tended to live in central and southern Gardena. Middle class black people began to move into the Hollypark area in northern Gardena in the 1960s, so the black population was concentrated there.^[20]

1970–1978

According to the 1970 U.S. Census, 56% of the population was White. Racial demographic changes occurred until 1978. That year, Mayor Edmond J. Russ declared that, according to a special 1978 census, the racial demographics of Gardena had stabilized.^[21]

Ethnic groups

Japanese Americans

Gardena has a large Japanese-American community.^[22] Until 2014, it had the second-highest concentration of Japanese Americans in any U.S. municipality, the first being Honolulu. As of 2014, the nearby city of Torrance holds the highest Japanese-American population in the 48 contiguous states.^[23]

The Japanese Cultural Institute (JCI) has been is located in Gardena since 1988, and offers cultural and social activities for Japanese Americans. The building used during that year was completed in 1976.^[24]

Early in Gardena's history, Japanese migrants played a role in the agrarian economy. The Japanese Association founded the Moneta Japanese Institute in 1911, and the Parents' Association founded the Gardena Japanese School in 1916.^[25] Beginning in the 1920s, Japanese American organizations, including the *Moneta Gakuen*, were established continuously around the current JCI site. The *Moneta Gakuen* operated a school until the World War II internment.^[24]

In 1942 the U.S. military moved the Japanese in Gardena to internment camps.^[25]

In 1966, for the first time, a Nisei was seated on the city council.^[26] In 1980, the city was 21% Japanese, and as of 1989, Japanese residents tended to live in the center and south of the city.^[20]

Korean Americans

As of 1992 about 60% of the Korean population in the South Bay region lived in Gardena and Torrance. By that year, many Korean businesses had been established in Gardena because its commercial land was more affordable than that of Torrance, a middle-class base, and it also had an established Asian population.^[27] In 1990, 2,857 ethnic Koreans lived in Gardena, a 209% increase from the 1980 figure of 924 ethnic Koreans.^[28]

Economy

Digital Manga is headquartered in Suite 300 at 1487 West 178th Street.^[29] Nissin Foods has its United States headquarters and a plant in Gardena.^{[30][31]} Nissin Foods (U.S.A.) Co., Inc. opened in Gardena in 1970.^[32] Marukai Corporation U.S.A. has its headquarters in Gardena.^[33] En Pointe Technologies is based in Gardena. Nissan's North America headquarters were located in Gardena until they moved to Tennessee in 2006.

National Stores Inc., which operates the Factory 2-U and the Fallas Paredes brands, has its headquarters in the Harbor Gateway area of Los Angeles,^[34] near Gardena.^[35]

Top employers

According to the city's 2012 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report,^[36] the top employers in the city are:

#	Employer	# of employees
1	Memorial Hospital of Gardena	735
2	Hustler Casino	712
3	United Parcel Service	500
4	Hitco Carbon Composites	465
5	Normandie Casino	410
6	Southwest Offset Printing	354
7	Ramona's Mexican Food	240
8	Nissin Foods	230
9	Target	220
10	Sam's Club	167

Government

In the California State Legislature, Gardena is in the 35th Senate District, represented by Democrat Steven Bradford, and in the 66th Assembly District, represented by Democrat Al Muratsuchi.^[37]

In the United States House of Representatives, Gardena is in California's 43rd congressional district, represented by Democrat Maxine Waters.^[38]

Education

Primary and secondary schools

The Los Angeles Unified School District operates public schools.

Zoned middle schools include:

- Peary Middle School^[39]
 - Some areas in Gardena have a choice between Peary and Henry Clay Middle School.^[40] (Los Angeles)

Zoned high schools include:

- Gardena High School (Los Angeles)

In the spring of 1956, the junior high school classes stayed at the old Gardena High School while the high school classes moved into a new building. Up until the opening of the new Gardena High School, high school students held morning shifts, while junior high school students held afternoon shifts.^[41]

Private schools

The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Los Angeles operates Catholic schools in Gardena, including Junípero Serra High School,^[42] Maria Regina Catholic School (K-8),^[43] and St. Anthony of Padua School (K-8).^[44] Gardena Valley Christian School, a K-8 non-Catholic private school, is in Gardena.^[45] The Gardena Christian Academy, a PreK-2 Christian school, is in Gardena.^[46]

Infrastructure

Public services

The Gardena Office of Economic Development is a department of the city government. It aids employers in filling a variety of jobs customized to their specific needs. It also helps potential employers in setting up business enterprises.

The Gardena Police Department is the primary law enforcement agency in the city. The department has 93 sworn police officers, 24 full-time support staff, and 33 part-time employees. There are reserve, volunteer, and explorer programs. The

current Chief of Police is Edward Medrano, appointed in 2007. Radio communications and the 9-1-1 call center are handled by the South Bay Regional Public Communications Authority.

The Los Angeles County Department of Health Services operates the Curtis Tucker Health Center in Inglewood and the Torrance Health Center in Harbor Gateway, Los Angeles, near Torrance and serving Gardena.^{[47][48]}

The United States Postal Service operates the Gardena Post Office at 1455 West Redondo Beach Boulevard,^[49] the South Gardena Post Office at 1103 West Gardena Boulevard,^[50] and the Alondra Post Office at 14028 Van Ness Avenue.^[51]

Libraries

Gardena Mayme Dear Library, a 16,000-square-foot (1,500 m²) building located in Gardena,^[52] and Masao W. Satow Library, located west of Gardena in Alondra Park (El Camino Village), unincorporated Los Angeles County,^{[53][54]} are operated by the County of Los Angeles Public Library.

Wednesday Progressive Club sponsored the formation of the Gardena Library.^[52] In 1913 the Moneta Branch was formed.^[53] In 1914 the Gardena Library became a part of the Los Angeles County Free Library system. Due to annexation the library was transferred to the Los Angeles City Library Board.^[52] In 1919 the Strawberry Park branch was formed.^[53] In August 1951 the Gardena library came back to the county system.^[52] In 1958 the Strawberry Park and Moneta branches merged into the West Gardena Branch.^[53] The current Gardena library building was dedicated on December 5, 1964.^[52] In 1969 a fire forced the West Gardena branch to go to a new location. The current Satow building, dedicated on February 26, 1977, was named after a Japanese American in the community.^[53] The Gardena library received its current name on May 30, 1992, and was named after a library volunteer, who had died prior to the renaming.^[52]

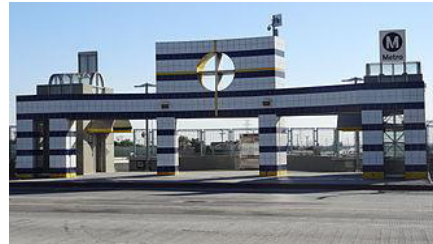
Transportation

The city operates the Gardena Municipal Bus Lines.

The National Transportation Safety Board operates the Gardena Aviation Field Office in Harbor Gateway, Los Angeles; it is the regional headquarters of the NTSB Aviation Western Region.^[55]

Notable people

- J.C. Agajanian, prominent racing promoter; owned and operated Ascot Park
- Paul Bannai, former city councilman and first Japanese American to serve in the California State Legislature^[56]
- Romana Acosta Bañuelos, 34th and first Hispanic US Treasurer; founder/owner of Ramona's Mexican Food Products, one of the oldest businesses still operating in the city
- Beau Bennett, Currently a forward for the AHL Chicago Wolves; highest-drafted hockey player to be born and trained in California of all-time
- Polly Bergen, actress and singer; lived in Gardena and attended Gardena High School^[57]
- Gary Berland, professional poker player; won five World Series of Poker bracelets; born and raised in Gardena
- Ron Block, banjo player, guitarist and singer-songwriter
- Steven Bradford, 1978 Gardena High School graduate; first African American elected to the Gardena City Council (1997–2009); former California Assemblyman (2009–2014)
- Enos Cabell, third baseman with the Baltimore Orioles and Detroit Tigers; attended Gardena High School^[57]
- Wayne Collett, runner, 1972 Summer Olympics silver medalist in the 400 meter event; attended Gardena High School^[57]
- Dock Ellis, pitcher with the Pittsburgh Pirates; attended Gardena High School^[57]
- Charlie Evans, running back with the New York Giants and Washington Redskins; born in Gardena^[58]
- Robert L. Freedman, screenwriter and playwright; former resident of Gardena
- Glen Fukushima, former Deputy Assistant US Trade Representative for Japan and China, 1988-1990
- Gaston Green, running back with the Los Angeles Rams and Denver Broncos; attended Gardena High School^[57]
- H.B. Halicki, actor, filmmaker, stuntman; business owner in Gardena and premiered his *Gone in 60 Seconds* there in 1974^[57]
- Juajuan Hawkins, professional basketball player; played with the Houston Rockets during the 2002-2003 NBA season^[59]
- Lisa Leslie, Olympic gold medalist and Los Angeles Sparks basketball player; born in Gardena ^[60]
- Butch Patrick, actor; was living in Gardena and attending PAE when he auditioned for *The Munsters*^[57]
- Art Pepper, innovative jazz saxophonist; born in Gardena



Rosecrans Metro Silver Line station at Gardena

- Paul Petersen, actor, novelist, activist; former resident of Gardena^[57]
- William Rosecrans, Union general, congressman, and ambassador to Mexico; owner of and resident upon (from 1869) "Rosecrans Rancho," the foundation upon which Gardena later emerged^[57]
- Kevin A. Ross, host of *America's Court with Judge Ross*; attended Gardena High School and served as the school's student body president^[57]
- Daewon Song, professional skateboarder; resident of Gardena
- George Stanich, high jumper and bronze medalist of the 1948 Summer Olympics; resident of Gardena^[57]
- Paul Tanaka, Mayor and council-member^[4]
- Tyga, rapper; attended Gardena High School^[61]
- Robert Woods, Los Angeles Rams wide receiver

See also

- Gardena Municipal Bus Lines
- South Bay, Los Angeles
- Ascot Park, a closed racetrack in Gardena

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External links

- Official website (<http://www.ci.gardena.ca.us>) 
 - Jobs and business: Gardena Economic Development (<http://www.gardenaecodev.com>)
 - Cultural: Gabrielino/Tongva Tribal Council website (<https://web.archive.org/web/20070203163556/http://www.tongva.com/>)
 - Cultural: Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute (<http://www.nikkeifederation.org/commcenters/gardena.html>)
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